



News Release

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Media Contacts:

Christi Fisher

Violence and Injury Prevention Program

(o) 801-538-6852 (m) 801-860-2544

Janet Brooks

Primary Children's Medical Center

(o) 801-662-6585 (m) 801-597-8070

Booster Seats Are Not One-Size-Fits-All

Parents Must Find the Right Fit for Their Child

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Booster seats are a proven way to help keep kids safe in vehicles.

Children who are restrained in booster seats are 59 percent less likely to be injured during a crash than those using seat belts alone. But a report released by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has questioned if certain booster seats provide children with a better fit than others.

“Kids come in all shapes and sizes, and not all boosters will fit all children the same way,” said Christi Fisher, Safe Kids Utah Coordinator and a health educator with the Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program (VIPPP). “Parents and caregivers shouldn’t panic about the results of this study. They should continue to use booster seats for their children on every ride.”

All of the booster seats tested met the government standard in crash tests. But booster seats are not designed to be one-size-fits-all. The different variations in boosters allow parents to find the right fit for each child.

“Safety belts are designed for adults and many children are too small to get a proper fit without using a booster seat,” said Janet Brooks, Child Advocate at Primary Children’s Medical Center and Vice President of Safe Kids Utah. “Booster seats can save lives. And in Utah, it’s the law for every child under the age of 8, or less than 4 feet 9 inches tall and less than 80 pounds, to be restrained in a safety seat.”

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Parents can follow four simple steps to make sure their child's booster fits the correct way:

1. Place your child on the booster seat and fasten the lap and shoulder seat belts around the child.
2. Use the seat belt guides on the booster seat for the lap and shoulder belts.
3. Check to be sure the lap belt rests on the top of the thighs or low on the hips.
4. Check to be sure the shoulder belt is positioned on the bony shoulder, not the neck or face. Never place the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back.

If the shoulder belt and lap belt are on the child as stated above, the booster seat will work as designed to protect your child in a crash. If not, try another brand until you find the one that fits your child.

“Fortunately, there are a lot of safe booster seats to choose from. It’s not about buying the most expensive booster seat – it’s about making sure you get the right fit for your child and car,” said Fisher.

Parents and caregivers can get a free car seat inspection by contacting their local health department or Safe Kids coalition. A list of inspection sites is also available by calling 801-662-CARS (2277) or online at <http://www.seatcheck.org/>.

For more information about Utah’s booster seat law or child passenger safety, visit <http://health.utah.gov/vipp> or <http://www.utahsafekids.org>.

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